

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A communications system and method for assigning forward link transponder assignments to mobile platforms is provided. The communications system comprises at least one ground station in communication with a plurality of satellites and mobile platforms, wherein the mobile platforms receive assignments to various transponders on the satellites through the ground station based on the desired set of data or services. The communications system requires a return link from the mobile platform to the ground station so that changes in the desired data or services can be confirmed, and accordingly, a default transponder assignment table is incorporated in each mobile platform to establish the return link in the event of receiver equipment failure. The communications system further comprises a set of forward link transponder assignments loaded onto a piece of communications equipment to provide the assignments to a piece of receiver equipment in the event of receiver equipment failure.